

COLONIAL LIFE IN AMERICA

Many different kinds of people lived in the 13 English colonies that became the United States. This picture shows just a few of them, including, *left to right*, an Indian, a Pilgrim, a New England farmer, a housewife, a town crier, and a Southern planter and his daughter.



COLONIAL LIFE IN AMERICA. The story of the American colonists is one of the great adventure stories of all time. It is the story of brave men and women who sailed across the Atlantic Ocean from Europe, conquered a wilderness, and founded a new nation. This story of courage and achievement took place in a remarkably short time. The colonial period lasted less than 170 years. It began with the settlement of Jamestown in 1607, and ended with the start of the Revolutionary War in 1775.

Most of the colonists were English. But America also attracted thousands of Dutch, French, Germans, Scotch-Irish, and Swedes. The colonists brought different customs and religious beliefs, but they shared a common goal. All were unhappy with life in the Old World and wanted to make a better life in the New World.

turning to Europe with furs, gold, and other riches. They also wanted to convert the Indians to Roman Catholicism. Their early settlements served as outposts for soldiers and traders, or as missions conducted by priests. On the other hand, the English colonies were settled by people from almost every walk of life. These people wanted to establish permanent homes in America.

In making America their homeland, the colonists were sometimes helped by the Indians. But often the Indians fought to keep their land. The colonists, fighting together and working together, overcame the Indians and the wilderness. They produced plenty of food and other vital products on their farms and plantations. They carried on a thriving trade with other countries. They built cabins and mansions, villages and cities. They established churches, schools, and local govern-



COLONIAL LIFE IN AMERICA / *The Thirteen Colonies*

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dangers and would suffer severe hardships. But they had important reasons for accepting the challenge of taming the wilderness.

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